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THE TRINITY REVIEW

VINUM DAEMONUM

"A weather-worn footbridge spans the still lagoon."

—*Wasteland,* Page 46.

THE TRINITY REVIEW

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ELECTIONS

At a recent meeting of the Board of *The Trinity Review* the following were elected to the offices designated:

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Marshall Nead, '41

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The Editor.

PREFACE

THE TRINITY REVIEW belongs not to any Department of the College nor to any special group of students but to every Trinity man. It is ours to support and to improve —by subscription, by contribution, and by constructive criticism. We need the *Review* and it needs us. Let us make it succeed.

ODELL SHEPARD

TUMBLEWEED

Marshall Nead, '41

EDMUND GILES stumbled and came near sprawling on the pavement as he took leave of the street car which had idly brought him to the corner of his block. He reddened slightly as he watched his portfolio, which cruised like a submarine on a rampage across a large puddle left by a recent shower. If anybody had been as interested in scrutinizing him as Edmund thought all persons to be, such a one would have noticed an expression of self-pity and defeat on the pinkish face of the middle-aged man. In truth this was an old story with Edmund—not that he fell off the street car as he returned from work to his bachelor apartment each day, but rather that he was always slipping, stumbling, missing his step, or otherwise attracting the supposed attention which caused him such undermining distress. This mishap was especially humiliating because of the portfolio—for this shiny case contained Edmund's future—a future into which he had hoped to stride rather than stumble. Thus to mis-navigate on his last trip home was unusually disconcerting to him.

Stooping over, Edmund reached for the portfolio—and missed. The vagrant package had reached the middle of the puddle, and seemed to be waiting there for a fresh easterly gale to carry it further. Edmund's lips framed a solemn "oh dear." He looked at his neat brown shoes, then at the stationary portfolio. His "future!" He must get it. With a tortured expres-

sion he slowly lowered one neat brown shoe into the puddle. A bevy of ambulating young girls paused on the sidewalk nearby and tittered. Edmund would have retrieved his foot, but the constant threat of extinction by a rapid column of cars which had to circumnavigate him caused him to persevere to his utmost ability. Swinging his terrestrial foot up into the window of a stationary Cadillac which had been forced to stop to prevent an amputation, and bearing his full weight on his aquatic foot, Edmund lunged. He seized one corner of his meandering "future," and, coaxing it into a state of momentum, he was soon able to clutch it. The bevy began to cheer wildly, and the patient Cadillac moved on. He had it! Such incidentals as the girls and car meant nothing now. He could escape! There was something of the victor in his expression as, mud-besmirched, he trotted over to the sidewalk. Why not? His "future," still dripping with mud and water, was safely tucked under his arm.

Amid the tranquillity of his apartment, Edmund removed his shoes, dropped with a moan of comfort and relief into his easy chair, and removed his "future" from the soggy portfolio. Joyfully he contemplated the handful of papers—his accepted resignation from Tipple and Tumble, the bunch of receipted bills, and the title to "Sea-Moan," his father's cottage far away by the sea, far, far away from Tipple and Tumble, from street cars, and tittering girls. Edmund smiled happily, sneezed, wriggled his damp foot, and sneezed again. Peace! he'd have it at long last! In ecstasies of anticipatory delight such as he had not thought possible he reminisced upon childhood days, (tugged at his wet sock), saw himself playing about on the great cliff on which "Sea-Moan" rested, (pulled the sock off), saw and heard the great white horses rise up and

spend themselves on the kelp-covered rocks below. The great cliff! (He dropped his limp sock amidst his "future" which lay sprawled out around the chair where, in his spasm of joy, he had cast it.) The cliff! He could see the clear outline of his mother's face as she warned him over and over every hour of every day not to go near its edge. How well he remembered her anguished calls when one day a strong wind had been blowing off shore, and he, knowing from his father that the wind caused the waves, had gone to the rim of the cliff to see what happened to them when the wind blew the "wrong" way. Turning to see what was prompting his mother's calls, a sudden puff of wind had pushed him backward, until, with a scream, he had fallen amid great tufts of grass which bordered the cliff, clinging desperately to them. He had been greatly frightened; yet but a quarter of an hour later, out near the wood shed where his father so often labored sawing convenient lengths for the old stove that made the place so cozy at night, Edmund would have forgotten the event, except for his mother, who came out, announced that she would not stay there any longer. Edmund wasn't hurt, why it had almost been fun, pulling himself up amongst the tall grass. But how she fumed and sputtered until her husband, seeing the futility of nonchalantly continuing to saw wood in silence, had put his arm about her, and, taking Edmund by the hand, had led them around to the front porch. Here Mr. Giles had delivered a very wonderful speech—surely it had seemed the best speech ever made. It was all about God's gift of the great sea, the protective virtues of the great cliff which held the waves back, the awful conditions of less fortunate people back in the hot city, with a final fling into fields of advanced philosophy beyond young Edmund's

ability to comprehend. It had all been very grand, but a little sorrowful too, for Mrs. Giles had gone into the house crying. Why was it that mothers always had to nag so, and were always wrong? But in spite of his father's reassurance, Edmund had repeatedly thought of that day. Often he would rouse from his sleep in the middle of the night, panting with relief to find himself safe at home instead of out on the cliff.

But that difficult day was many years past. He was, he reasoned, as he hung his wet sock over the bathroom radiator, a man now. He could see his father's point of view, or at least he thought he could. Edmund was never sure of anything. He looked in a mirror nearby. No, he had not the determined face of his father, nor was there the strength of character that was his mother's. In fact he decided it was a rather blank face that confronted him in the glass. He had better wash it and try to forget about it. He'd get a good tan and strong muscles down at "Sea-Moan." What a change it would be. Back to nature, as they called it. He wondered if he could saw wood. Well, if he couldn't he could buy plenty. He hadn't pinched and saved for twenty years for nothing. Think of it! Retiring at forty-two! After a ten-minute hunt for dry socks during which he twice went around on the muddied shoe which he had left in the middle of the room, Edmund prepared to start out for his last dinner in the city. He was tired—he'd had a hard day—but there wouldn't be any more such days!

One had to have a car if one were to live at "Sea-Moan" out on that isolated cliff. Yes, Edmund supposed the man in town was right. People just didn't hike four miles for provisions these days. So, in a second-hand car, and with no license (he'd probably get caught—never did such a thing before) Edmund

Giles approached his refuge by the sea. The woods ended, and there, a few hundred feet before him, "Sea-Moan" thrust a slanting shingle roof and stone chimney into the bluest sky Edmund had seen in many years. The cottage was well-built to withstand winter cold and the showers of spray which, they said, would rise up over the cliff and deluge the little structure. Edmund's "new" vehicle lurched up beside the old wood shed and came to rest. A general commotion in the vicinity of the back right wheel told Edmund that a nail had done its fatal duty. Edmund thought of an ancient oath which his father had found ameliorating on certain trying occasions, but, lest he get off to a bad start, he swallowed it with a grunt. Getting out, he hurried onto the back porch of the little house, where, in anticipation of a simultaneous entrance into his past and future, Edmund dropped the keys with a clatter. How contrary to his ideal plans were these plaguing realities, so much like those from which he was withdrawing! He stooped over and picked them up to catch sight of a small green snake gliding forth from beneath the house. The errant keys slipped from his fingers again. The snake wriggled away into the grass out of sight. Again Edmund picked up the keys, and, clearing his throat, recovered some of his shattered composure. With the assurance of the Great Alexander he thrust the wrong key into the lock. The key was too small! How *dare* the damn key be too small? He pushed, and twisted, and tugged, and puffed, but the little thing had become caught, and wouldn't come loose. Edmund erected himself, and, opening his mouth, gave a dismal groan. What was the use? During this mental interrogation he felt a slight stab of pain in his left foot, accompanied by a dull clink. Edmund proceeded to leap into the air and howl. The

snake had bitten him! But snakes don't clink! Looking down Edmund saw the keys resting at his feet. The gentle pressure exerted by their own weight had caused the keys to extricate themselves from the lock. For the third time in five minutes Edmund picked up his keys. He gave full attention to the task, and finally selected the proper key. As he stood in the open doorway, Edmund heard a soft rustle under the porch. The reptile had returned. Edmund groaned. One of them must go!

Inside all was calm. To his nostrils, most familiar with city dust, the sweet scent of fir pillows, little monuments to another age, made by his mother, was enlivening. All was neat and perfect. The sight of little things—the chair with the mended leg (he had held it while his mother applied the glue), his tiny home-made sailboat, the gruesome sketch of "The Indian Lover's Dive From The Cliff" which his mother had hated so much, all old familiarities which he had forgotten, brought a flood of memories into his mind. His dreams about being a sea captain, and a hundred other unfulfilled hopes and desires suddenly made his head reel. He walked over to an old rocker and sank down. How silent the old place was. Here and there an offending cob-web caused the slanting rays of the late afternoon sun to cast shadows like primitive fish nets on the floor. Edmund felt frightened. The silence and orderliness of the place crowded in upon him. It was like a tomb in which relics of the past had carefully and formally been arranged never to be disturbed. But he supposed he would soon make it cheery. Edmund rose to go out on the porch. As he strode across the room, his head became involved in a cob-web which enveloped him like a hair net. The struggle that ensued left Edmund

breathless. This was his mother's world. He must go out into his father's. He'd come back later and straighten the place out—hoped he could get used to the quiet of the house.

The sun was sinking behind a bank of purple clouds when Edmund stepped out onto the porch. Evening was coming; he ought to be unpacking, but he must see the view. How different it was out here. There was sound—the deep throbbing of the ageless sea, a dark purple sea that stretched out for miles in a vast semi-circle to meet the lighter purple of the sky. As the salt sea breeze tossed his hair about, Edmund thought of how right his father had been. Here was God's great gift of the sea—here no city strife, no puddles, no tittering girls. Edmund stepped off the porch, filling and refilling his dusty lungs with the pure air. He looked up and saw a large gray and white sea gull, which, upon endeavoring to fly seawards, remained stationary above him, idly and futilely flapping its wings. Edmund envied the bird. Later he would regret such a feeling, which, if thought over, must appear rather ridiculous. But now he seemed to see there in this sky creature the symbol of the freedom for which he had surrendered his career. Edmund walked forward a few steps. Now he reminisced his way back into childhood. He saw himself carrying home, proudly, a baby gull. He was going to care for it—feed it with a medicine dropper—and some day it would grow strong and fly away. He would keep it behind the warm stove, and—but it had died. Edmund looked up again. Now the gull was flying forward slowly. Now he progressed rapidly. At the same instant Edmund felt a light breeze on his neck, on his back, pushing him. Automatically he stepped forward, then stopped dead. A feeling of terror came over him. A

short way out over the water the gull was swooping and soaring, the last rays of daylight catching his wings as he rose and fell. Edmund laughed aloud, almost scaring himself. Why should he be afraid? He was no longer a child. The wind grew in strength. He could go right back to the cottage any moment he wanted to. Yet he had an ancient curiosity, a childhood question which growth into manhood hadn't solved. Edmund still wanted to see what happened to the waves when the wind blew the "wrong" way! He walked forward again. Now he stood amidst those tufts of grass which had once saved his life. He looked down. There they were, the great white horses. Why, they simply kept pounding just the same, no matter what way the wind blew! Suddenly out of the wind he heard a cry—a woman's voice. He turned, but it was to meet a great gust of wind that pushed and pushed at him. Edmund stepped, but not high enough. His forward foot hit a clump of grass. He stumbled. Again the wind freshened. The cry that Edmund gave was submerged in that of the sea gull which swooped down near the cliff, uncaring. Dizzily Edmund swung into space. One hand seized a tuft of grass, but the tuft came away. He was a man now, a retired gentleman, and the great white horses rolled and pounded just the same, whatever way the wind might blow.

STATUS QUO

Prospero DeBona, '41

JO-ANN was lying on the big rock. She lay there and wondered. She squinted up at the sun, the back of her head resting on her hands, her brown legs stretched out before her. On either side of her lay a boy. One was tall and one was short; both were good looking in a young sort of way. The sun was warm there at the beach, and the wind was just cool enough to prevent discomfort. But Jo-Ann was not so happy as a girl of seventeen might have been under those circumstances. Jo-Ann was worried.

She sat up and a breeze came in off the water and blew through her yellow hair, lifted the edge of her white shorts. Jo-Ann looked at the boys who were lying beside her with their eyes closed: she looked first at one, then at the other. She chewed her lower lip thoughtfully. Then, brushing her hands together to remove the grains of sand, she said, "Anybody got a cigarette?"

Johnny, the shorter one, sat up quickly and fumbled anxiously in his pockets. "Sure, Jo-Ann. Just a minute."

Bill, still reclining, his long legs crossed at the ankles, smoothly drew a crumpled package from his shirt pocket and tossed it into her lap. "Here, kid, try one of mine."

Johnny looked at Bill, then hastened to offer Jo-Ann a light. Jo-Ann said, "Thanks, Johnny."

And Johnny smiled happily. Jo-Ann looked again

at Bill and felt the impulse to kick him. He looked so damned comfortable. But instead she took a deep breath and said brightly, "Let's go for a sail, boys."

"Okay," said Johnny. "Good idea." He leapt to his feet.

But Jo-Ann was watching Bill, waiting for his answer. "What do you say, Bill? Coming?"

Bill merely shifted his back into a more comfortable position and murmured, "No, thanks. This sun's wonderful."

"Oh, come on," said Jo-Ann, "you can sun yourself on the boat. Don't be so lazy."

"No, you two go ahead." Bill waved a hand of dismissal; his eyes were still closed. "I'll be here when you come back."

"Oh, come on, Jo-Ann," said Johnny. "The wind's just right now. Let's go."

Jo-Ann rose slowly and jumped to the sand with Johnny. Then they walked a short distance along the white beach to where the rowboat was lying just above the water's edge.

Johnny grasped the bow and pushed the little craft into the water. Then he held it steady while Jo-Ann climbed in and sat on the stern seat. When she was seated, he shoved off and jumped nimbly into the boat. He sat opposite Jo-Ann, put his oars out, and started to row. He set his course for a trim-looking sailboat which was riding smoothly at the end of its anchor rope a hundred yards out.

"Jo-Ann," he said, "what about the beach club dance Saturday night? You're going with me, aren't you?"

Jo-Ann expertly flicked her cigarette out into the water and let smoke trickle slowly from her nostrils as she spoke.

"I told you, Johnny, that I don't know yet whether I can or not."

"But why not, Jo-Ann?" He looked at his hands on the oars.

Jo-Ann was watching the rocks where Bill was still lying comfortably in the sun.

"Well," she said, "you know how those parties always end up, and Mother might not want me to go. So I'll have to wait until she comes back from town before I can know."

"But gee, Jo-Ann, today's Tuesday, and the dance is Saturday." He looked unhappy.

"I know it, Johnny, and I'm sorry. But what can I do?" Johnny didn't answer. He looked sadly at the floor boards and continued to pull at his oars. His short hair stood on end and was damp with perspiration. The sun was high now and very hot. Jo-Ann glanced at him and said, "Maybe you'd better ask someone else, Johnny. I mean, after all, it is Tuesday, and I won't know before Thursday. Then if I can't go, you'll be left without a girl."

Johnny said quickly, "Oh, no, Jo-Ann, I wouldn't want to ask anyone else. I'll wait until you find out."

Jo-Ann smiled gently.

Johnny drew the small boat alongside the larger one and shipped his oars. He held the two boats close together while Jo-Ann climbed from one into the other. Then he handed her the painter of the rowboat and followed her. A few minutes later they were under way, leaving the small boat bobbing and skipping on the waves. The breeze was fairly stiff on the water, and the sailboat, heeling over nicely, stepped right along. Jo-Ann climbed out on the little deck and lay face down, leaning over the edge to watch and hear the

bow splashing through the water. Johnny handled the tiller and the sail.

They never talked much when they sailed; so Jo-Ann was able to think. She thought of dark-haired Bill, who cared for nothing but comfort and for no one but himself. She thought about how nice it would be if he would ask her to the dance at the beach club and how nice it would be if afterwards they went riding or something, riding along the empty shore roads with the top of the car down and the wind blowing her hair. And maybe he would kiss her. She didn't mean just an ordinary kiss; she meant a kiss that would mean something. Or maybe they would stop at the Greek's little all-night stand and buy some hamburgers and play the nickelodeon. And then maybe he would kiss her again and tell her how beautiful she was. But Bill probably wouldn't ask her, because he hated to dress up, and the dance was formal. He'd probably come strolling in wearing his slacks and sneaks, stay long enough to grab something to eat or maybe to play ping pong in the game room. Then he'd go home and sleep. Besides, she brooded, he went to college and thought she was just a kid.

She thought of Johnny, who would love to take her to the dance, who would love to put on his white linen dinner jacket and join in the festivities. And afterwards he would be dying to go riding and to kiss her, but he would be afraid to suggest it. Not that she'd let him kiss her, anyway! And a hamburg with Johnny just wasn't like a hamburg with Bill. Johnny went to college too, of course, but you'd never guess it. Jo-Ann was glad that her mother was away. She had an excuse to stall Johnny. She knew that he would not ask anyone else; the more she suggested it, the more

certain he would be not to do it. So she could always depend on him as an escort, if Bill didn't offer himself. But Bill would have to ask her; he must, or she would be miserable.

The bow of the boat dipped farther into the water, and the crest of a wave splashed up and showered her. Jo-Ann licked the salt from her lips with a nimble tongue and withdrew from the deck into the cockpit. Johnny grinned at her. "Pretty choppy, eh?"

Jo-Ann nodded and cuddled down away from the wet and chilling breeze.

When they came in to the buoy about an hour later, Jo-Ann could see Bill still lying on the rocks. He was evidently asleep. Johnny fastened the anchor rope around the bow cleat and left the sail up to dry. Then he pulled in the tiller and the rudder. He followed Jo-Ann into the rowboat and rowed ashore. The oars squeaked a little as they moved around in the brass oar locks. Johnny pulled the boat up on the beach and they strolled quietly to the rock where Bill was. Jo-Ann scooped some water with her hands and threw it in his face. He awoke calmly, yawned, blinked, and said, "Have fun?"

Jo-Ann wanted to scream.

"Swell breeze," said Johnny. "The old lady scooted right along today."

"That's what I figured," said Bill. "Relax, kids." He closed his eyes again.

"I've got to go home for lunch," said Johnny. "Doing anything this afternoon, Jo-Ann?"

Jo-Ann looked at Bill, who was still lying on his back, and shook her head. She sat down.

Johnny said, "Well, I'll see you on the beach, then. Maybe we can go get a sundae in the village."

Jo-Ann nodded again. And Johnny turned and

jumped to the sand. He trotted towards the other end of the row of cottages perched along the top of the hill which rose from the beach.

Bill lay there and Jo-Ann watched him. Once in a while as the sun hurt his eyes he would stretch his lips over his teeth. His eyelashes were long and black against his cheeks.

Finally she said, "When do you have lunch, Bill?"

"Any time I come for it," he said. "My family's trained; they like me—even the cook. When's yours?"

"Anytime."

"That's good. Gee, this sun's warm. How's my face—red?"

"A little. Bill?"

"Yeah?"

"Are you going to the club dance?"

No answer.

"Bill!"

His eyes snapped open.

"What! Oh—sorry, Jo-Ann. I was thinking. What is it?"

"I said, are you going to the dance at the club?"

"That thing? God, no! Can't stand those brawls. Women, women everywhere, but never a one to love! Not for me, gal. Why, are you?"

"I don't know yet." She frowned.

"What's the matter—no date?"

"Oh, no, I can get a date; but I don't know whether I want to go. You know how those things are." Jo-Ann looked briefly at Bill.

"Yeah, sure. Don't blame you if you don't go. But a good-looker like you ought to circulate." Bill was nineteen and a junior in college. "Give the fellows a break," he said. "You ought to go, Jo-Ann."

"I suppose so. But nobody I like'll be there."

"Oh, sure they will; all your friends'll go. Everyone goes except me. No, sir, you can't get me to go to one of those shindigs."

"No, but I mean, no one I *really* like'll be there."

"Oh, sure they will. Everyone goes, I tell you. Everyone but me."

Jo-Ann sighed. "Well, maybe." She rose to her feet. "Guess I'll run home for lunch. Going swimming this afternoon, Bill?"

"Yeah, at high tide."

"I'll see you then."

"Okay, kid."

Jo-Ann walked along the sand. She stopped once in a while to pick up a flat stone and scale it across the water. She counted the skips. When she had gone a hundred yards, she turned and ran up some stone steps to the sea wall. Then she entered her house.

That afternoon Jo-Ann went swimming with Bill and Johnny; then she and Johnny went to the little village, ate some ice cream, and bought some penny candy in the drug store. Bill refused to leave his sun; so he did not go with them.

That night Jo-Ann's mother returned. Unexpectedly. A young woman, handsome and kind, she looked upon her daughter's predicament with tolerant amusement and understanding.

"Which boy would you rather go to the dance with, Jo-Ann," she said, when Jo-Ann consulted her.

"With Bill, Mother. But he hasn't even asked me. And I can't very well ask him, can I?"

"No, I don't suppose you can."

"And besides, he doesn't want to go. He doesn't like the beach club dances. He'd rather sleep. Darn it!" Jo-Ann felt like crying.

"Now, dear," said her mother, "be sensible."

She paused a moment, remembering how hard it is to be sensible at the age of seventeen. But she went on, "If Bill won't go, you'll just have to go with Johnny. He's a nice boy—a nicer boy in his way than Bill. You just see Johnny and tell him I said you may go."

"Oh, mother, but he's so—so unromantic! And besides—I told him you wouldn't be home until Thursday."

Jo-Ann's mother said, "I see." And she tried to remember what it is that seventeen means by "romantic." Then she said,

"Well, did he say he would wait until then?"

"Yes." Jo-Ann was petulant now.

"Then tell him Thursday. Or better—tell him I came back unexpectedly and that you have my permission." And Jo-Ann's mother dismissed the subject, happy in her so simple solution to her daughter's problem. Kind and understanding though she was, she had her worries too.

So when Jo-Ann saw Johnny that afternoon, she did not tell him. They were lying on the raft, sunning themselves. Bill was on the beach. Johnny said abruptly, "How about the dance, Jo-Ann?"

And Jo-Ann, surprised, said, "Why I don't know yet, Johnny. I told you I'd let you know as soon as I can. Don't you think I want to go?"

Johnny did not say anything. He was looking out at Long Island, dim and low-lying in the distance. Jo-Ann watched him.

"If you want to ask some other girl, Johnny, go ahead."

And Johnny said softly, not looking at her, "No, Jo-Ann, I don't *want* to ask another girl."

And Jo-Ann thought she had a little more time to

waste. But she wasn't sure. So that night as she and her mother were dining, she said, "Mother, Bill won't go; but I want to. Bill won't ask me. Johnny did. So I think I'll tell Johnny it's all right."

Her mother said, "That's what I'd do, Jo-Ann."

After dinner Jo-Ann walked to the beach club. The young members were all gathered in the game room—dancing to the music of the nickelodeon, playing ping pong, drinking cokes, talking. She stopped to speak to several of her friends. She saw Johnny sitting at a table with a group of boys. He waved at her, but he did not come over. Jo-Ann was surprised; he usually came running when he saw her. But tonight he merely waved and went on with his conversation. So finally Jo-Ann went over to him, excused herself, and said, "May I see you a minute, Johnny?"

Jo-Ann thought he looked reluctant, but she wasn't sure. Anyway, he arose and walked outside with her to the railing on the sea wall. The stars were out; so was the moon. There was a path of moonlight on the water. The waves came up and lapped at the beach, then sighed as they retreated. The lapping became weaker, quieter, as the tide went out. A lovely night. And Jo-Ann said, "Johnny, Mother's back. She says I can go to the dance." Jo-Ann's voice had a lilt to it. Now that she had decided to go with Johnny and had definitely put aside any idea of going with Bill, she was enthusiastic, anticipating the excitement and fun of the big event. And besides, she was confident that Johnny would be glad. But Johnny said nothing. Jo-Ann looked at him. She said again, "Johnny, Mother says I can go."

And Johnny said, "Yeah, I heard you, Jo-Ann. The only trouble is—"

Jo-Ann's heart started to squirm. "What, Johnny? You want me to go, don't you?"

(Mark Rainsford, '41)

"She could hear water swishing around the edge of the rock."

—*Status Quo*, Page 24.

"Well, you see, Jo-Ann—" He stopped again and swallowed.

"What's the matter, Johnny?" Jo-Ann didn't know whether to be angry or frightened.

"Well, I knew your mother was home last night. My mother was talking to her. And today when I asked you again on the raft and you said you didn't know yet, I—well, I figured you didn't want to go. I thought you were letting me down easy. I thought you didn't want to have to tell me 'no', so you just wanted me to take the hint. So I did. And I asked Caroline."

Jo-Ann didn't know what to say; she was only seventeen.

Johnny looked at her and said, "Gee, I'm sorry, Jo-Ann. But that's what I thought."

Jo-Ann said, "That's all right, Johnny. Thanks anyway." And she went home.

Saturday night—the night of the dance—she sat on the rocks. It was chilly and she wore her polo coat. Her trousered knees were tucked up against her heart. The moon was not out, but the stars were. It was dark where she was, but she was glad. She could hear the music coming from the club house, but she didn't think about it. She could hear water swishing around at the edge of the rock, and she could hear the creaking of ropes on the boats. She smoked a cigarette; she tried to think that she didn't care, that dances don't really mean much. Then she heard someone walking on the rock, and she saw a cigarette coming towards her. Behind the cigarette was Bill. He sat down beside her.

"Hello, Jo-Ann," he said softly.

"Hello, Bill."

"Swell night."

"Umm."

They sat there a few minutes. Then Bill said, "Want to go for a ride?"

Jo-Ann said, "No, thanks, Bill. Let's just sit here."

"Sure, kid." His voice was gentle.

And a little later he walked with her to her door and said goodnight. He didn't kiss her, and she was glad. It was better that way.

The next morning the beach was crowded. But on the big rock there were only three people. Jo-Ann was lying there. She squinted at the sun, the back of her head resting on her hands. Her brown legs were stretched out before her. On either side of her lay a boy. One was tall; one was short; both were good-looking in a young sort of way. The sun was warm, and the wind was just cool enough to prevent discomfort. And Jo-Ann was happy—as a girl of seventeen should be. She wasn't worried.

-• ◆ •-

A SONNET

When first I offered you my youthful song,
You laughed, but heard me, patient to the end.
You said, " 'Tis pretty, sir, but much too long.
Your hand outspeeds your heavy heart, my friend."
And when again I sent the melody,
You, laughing, ordered me to try once more:
"The crest of that same tide that swells the sea
Is but the sum of all that went before.
Try yet again." Ah yes, how oft I tried!
As often as you heard, you laughed aloud.
Oh, cruel to keep me ever at your side,
To beg me sing, and then mock all I vowed.
You found a thousand faults in what I'd sung
But this, the one true fault—I was too young!

Robert Cooper, '40

PRELUDE TO DEFEAT

James Murray, '43

THEY were a strange crew, the four of them. There were the three generals, sitting cross-legged at the rough-hewn table, their booted legs visible underneath; and there was Anastase, off in a corner, gorging himself with a plate full of something that looked like nothing so much as a plateful of mud.

Anastase was a privileged character. Of the whole personnel of the 27th Red Army Division, it happened to be his own luck to be appointed driver of the supply truck which transported narcotics from the base at Leningrad to the field hospital here at Kuhmo. And Anastase had not been driving three weeks, when he became acquainted with the fact that a judicious stop at the generals' headquarters with a subsequent delivery of a small quantity of a powerful stimulative drug was quite certain to gain for Anastase incalculable privileges, such as eating in the generals' headquarters and partaking of some of the most delicious *vodka* west of Moscow. Had he chosen to, Anastase could have gained for himself privileges of a vastly superior nature to these he now held; but Anastase was stupid. He was stupid, and, morever, he was content. Anastase was content as long as he did not have to go to the front lines. For Anastase had a mortal terror of guns, especially guns in the hands of Finnish soldiers. In the early days of the war, before happy fortune had pro-

pelled him into his present position, Anastase had experienced several horror-filled encounters with Finnish soldiers and guns. He had not actually seen any Finnish soldiers, inasmuch as they had been dressed in white and had moved over the dazzling snow with such incredible swiftness that Anastase had a quick, horrified vision of massy snow banks rising up to meet him. After that, Anastase had not seen any Finnish soldiers for the simple physical reason that his eyes were facing in the general direction of Moscow, and his legs were propelling vigorously in the wake of the rest of his person.

As he sat eating at headquarters pouring great forkfuls of the unsavory mass on his plate down his throat, Anastase reflected sadly on the turmoil of the times. Anastase could not understand why the Finns should attack Russia. He could not understand why a people should prefer war and hard times to a happy, quiet life at home. And, surely, the Finns, devils though they were, must have homes, and a quiet, normal life like Russians. Anastase looked up at the generals, who were busy going over a voluminous group of colored maps.

"I wonder why the Finns want war?" he asked. "Do they like to kill, perhaps? How can they leave their homes and farms to seek war?"

General Djunkowski, a wiry, bald-headed little man with thick, sensuous lips and weak, watered eyes looked up reflectively.

"It is their women," he said, spreading his hands airily. "Have you ever seen a Finn's woman? They are all fat; and as sloppy as old sows."

Immediately Anastase felt better. Here was something he could understand. If a man had only ugly women from whom to choose a wife, he would, quite

naturally, not mind going to war. The workings of a Finnish soldier's mind became less obtuse to Anastase; and Finns in general suffered a severe drop in prestige in his estimation.

General Kamarin, a tall, hard-eyed man with the long jaw and low forehead of the born murderer spoke. "But the Germans—ah, those were the troops! They fought for the sheer love of it. And how they could manoeuver!" He chuckled reminiscently. "I remember once they had two of the Czar's finest regiments shooting the brains out of one another because the Germans had slipped out from in between."

A mouthful of food, halfway between the plate and Anastase's mouth, paused in its flight, ("flight" being the only word to describe Anastase's furious gluttony). Anastase's face was aghast. "Killing each other! Russians killing Russians!"

Kamarin shrugged. "A soldier must expect to be shot. Whether by a fellow countryman or by a foreigner makes little difference. He is just as dead."

Anastase looked horrified; Djunkowski showed annoyance.

"You're a butcher, Kamarin," he said shortly.

Kamarin gazed cooly at Djunkowski. "So?" he asked insolently.

Djunkowski scowled.

Now for the first time the third general betrayed some interest in the conversation. He pushed the maps away from him and gazed about him blandly with the air of one who is used to holding authority and who expects to be listened to. He was the most distinguished looking of the three generals. His face had the slightly mystic look of the born ruler—and conqueror. Djunkowski, on the other hand, looked as if he imbibed a bit more freely than he should, which he did.

And Kamarin looked utterly, unswervingly ruthless, which *he* was. The third general, Shenatoff, was a man of vision; and for that reason he was the most dangerous man of the trio, although his finer sensibilities made him less the savage. When he spoke, it was with the soft, modulated tones of the aristocrat and scholar. And his eyes had a quiet, moody look; a man who has thrice escaped a purge list by an eyelash, and who knows that the next time he will not, is apt to have a moody look. He stood up.

"Generals," he spoke deliberately, "we attack at dawn."

Dead silence followed his words. Then Kamarin cleared his throat noisily.

"And not a damned bit too soon, if you ask me. Those Finnish louts have been begging for trouble long enough. I say, 'Smash them'."

Shenatoff leaned forward and almost whispered as he spoke.

"No, General, we do not smash them; we flank them. We smash at Kuhmo, and then we flank them with a special ski troop. It is time we won a victory and we do not win victories by smashing."

Kamarin looked at Shenatoff. His manner was vaguely sinister. "Russian troops always smash, General. It is the only thing they are good for. You cannot teach a Russian army to manoeuver. They are stupid; they are good only for smashing, like a mad bull into a red barn."

Shenatoff's lips grew thin and his accents were clipped, cold. "Tomorrow, General, we outflank the enemy. It is no longer the Russia of the Czars; it is a victorious Russia."

Kamarin opened his mouth as if to sneer, but subsided into a sulky silence. There was something

adamant in Shenatoff's manner which always served to discourage retort on the part of a subordinate.

Shenatoff turned to Anastase. "And you, Anastase, are detailed with the ski troops. Colonel Mikhailovitch will lead the battle on the right flank. We have need of expert skiers."

Suddenly and drastically Anastase lost his appetite. The fork dropped to the table with a loud clatter and Anastase's features assumed a weird, greenish hue. With one of those swift flashes of decision which had punctuated long periods of chronic indecision throughout his life he knew he must escape this threatened tragedy. He groped for an excuse. In a flash he realized he already had one. Vera! Vera, with the soft lips and the dark mellow eyes.

"But—but I have a girl," he protested. His voice rose to a whine. "I don't want to die. It is better to live. I want Vera; I have a girl."

Kamarin laughed loudly, contemptuously. "You you clumsy lout! You have a girl! And where did *you* get her? What would a girl want with a gross swine of a truck driver like you?"

Anastase strove to keep from blubbering. "I told her I was a lieutenant," he explained piteously.

Djunkowski, his watery eyes twinkling merrily, slapped his knee.

"Ha!" he shouted. "They all do. It is the same with all soldiers. I told a girl in the Sudan once that I was the Prince of Wales. Unfortunately the King died about that time and the poor creature went around under the impression that she was Queen of England."

Anastase could not manage even a sickly smile. He looked utterly lost, like a man who had just been wakened from a sound, dreamless sleep. He looked

on dumbly as Djunkowski continued to slap his knee and chuckle spasmodically.

It was a miserable world for Anastase. Even though a woman loved him, he must die. It puzzled him somewhat, too. He wondered why God so hated the world that he allowed such a situation to exist. It was only those who were not loved that could really afford to die. Anastase shook his head sadly. Surely those Finns were devils for having started all this. For a moment he almost became angry at them. But how can one be angry when he's afraid? Anastase wondered if it would help if he wept.

He watched General Shenatoff with dull, uncaring eyes. The general was about to leave. Anastase watched him buttoning his fur-collared great coat about his throat and he wondered how such a splendid looking man could be so diabolical as to send a man to be slaughtered. Shenatoff left and closed the door behind him.

No sooner had he left than Anastase was startled by the sound of a paper weight slammed on the floor. He looked up to see Kamarin, his face livid with rage, standing in the middle of the room.

"So, it is a victorious Russia now. Bah! A Russian army in command of that idiot! The commander-in-chief of the Eastern Front a wild dope fiend! The Kremlin shall know of this. And tomorrow the Russian army shall smash as it has always smashed. A Russian army trying to out-manoeuver an enemy! It's monstrous! What sport Mannerheim and his bloodthirsty animals will have cutting us down." He turned to Djunkowski. "How can an army of one million turn to mobile tactics? A million—" He turned and pointed to Anastase. "A million fat peasants like that one. It is monstrous, I tell you. I say, 'Smash them'."

He stopped and glared at the doorway where he had last seen Shenatoff. "And tomorrow we shall end by smashing the center as always. The ski troops will be of as little use to us as wild geese. It will be slaughter. And our heroic general will need a generous supply of his precious narcotics by nightfall tomorrow. The Kremlin shall know."

The words rang on the silence of the room like the sound of a huge bell. No one spoke. And, in spite of his own mental torture, Anastase could not suppress a shudder as he beheld the cold, spiteful venom in Kamarin's eyes.

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THE SHADOWY THREE

Junius Brutus and Franklin D.
And Benedict Arnold—shadowy three—
Sat on their well-upholstered hunkers
Watching Lucifer trim his bunkers.

Brutus arose with a snobbish lift
Of his full-cut Senatorial shift.
"Hear," he cried, "while I give my reason
For claiming the medal of all-time treason!

"I am the mucker who put the slug
On poor old Caesar's classical mug—
I am the Judas who did him dirt,
When I laid that needle under his shirt."

Benedict Arnold nodded his head—
"Yours was a trivial job," he said;
"You tricked one, but I fooled many—
Easily earned was *your* traitor's penny.

"I, with the wiles of a changer of money,
Figured a scheme that was suave as honey;
An ambulant army I betrayed—
But a *piker* are you, of low-down grade!"

"Avast your heaving," said Lucifer—
"Take note, for I solemnly do aver
That it's Franklin D. who deserves the plum
As the slyest slicker in Christendom!

"When he took charge with vigor and vim,
A nation's reliance was placed in him—
He published his doctrines far and wide,
From metropolis to countryside.

"He slaughtered the pigs and he throttled the banks—
He gave all prizes and ditched the blanks,
He loaded the dice and he stripped the decks,
And he cluttered the farmers with Treasury checks,

"He cluttered the ether with flabby fictions,
And muttered a million maledictions
On Jesuitical Charley Hughes,
For failing to cotton right up to his views.

"He trimmed the dollar and buried the gold,
And thus his country's honor he sold;
He laid the course of his Ship of State
Into the reaches of inky hate.

"With the deadly lure of a Lorelei
He used his cunning to gratify
His itch for paralogistic schemes
And indiscriminate scratch-house dreams."

"Hold on a minute," said Franklin D.,
"The dubious honors you heap on me
Are enough to damn forever and bind me—
Stooges of Satan, get thee behind me!

"Enough is plenty. Now I shall tell
The recorded facts for you hounds of Hell.
I'll give you the plain unvarnished story,
Here in the precincts of Purgatory.

"When I took over, that fateful year,
I followed an eminent engineer,
Who did his damnedest but never found out
What the depression was all about.

"He served his term in a dark blue funk,
Figuring out why the banks had sunk;
When the veterans called for their bonus award,
He turned upon them with fire and sword.

"The primary target of my attack
Was getting the country off its back—
And so, in a wave of friendly wishes
I started to scatter the loaves and fishes.

"I ordered a law to protect the savings
Of all our people against the cravings
Of larcenous bankers and similar ilk,
Who sought for credulous clients to bilk.

"I taught the laborer and his wife
Their right to a more abundant life.
My whole career I dedicated
To raising up the subjugated.

"But for all that's happened I bear no grudge—
I'm fully prepared to meet my Judge,
For I'll not be required to dicker for votes
In the frosty presence of nine old goats!"

John Glynn, '42

TOWN'S END

H. Stanley Knowles, '43

YOU often see the Mrs. Moshiers of this world. Sometimes you see them as they pass through the yellow circle of light from a street lamp, walking slowly, head bowed. Sometimes you see them weeding a few flowers in a garden at the edge of a town, not paying much attention to what they're doing—just weeding. But no matter where you see them, they always have that same illusive quality about them, as if they had lived long ago, yet had already passed far into the future. The Mrs. Moshier whom this story is about was one of those who lived on the edge of a town.

The town was a small, isolated place out west, in Michigan I think. And it was here that Mrs. Moshier had lived all her life, an incongruous presence in the midst of a small town ignorance. Not that the situation had always been that way. Five years earlier she had been content to follow the pattern of life laid down by the inhabitants, and they, in their turn, had awarded her all that they knew of friendship. But that was ended now. People avoided her. She still went her way as she had always done; but a change had taken place and the people sensed it and were suspicious of her because of it.

"What call has she got to act like such a martyr for?" the grocer's wife used to say. "'Cause she lost her husband don't give her no right to be so superior."

"She gives me the creeps," was the druggist's wife's comment. "Always sort 'a smiling to herself and looking far away like she didn't care about anything 'cept maybe that old cow she owns and her garden."

The men in the town had the same impressions as their wives had about Mrs. Moshier; and when they got together they used to talk about how she could get along on the little that her husband had left her. Sometimes they even talked about doing something for her, but they never did. They didn't know what to do. And all the while Mrs. Moshier went on doing the things she had always done. She managed to keep her cow pastured behind the house, and she tended her garden carefully, almost devotedly. She never had had much else to do anyway. She had just been a good wife, and now that her husband was dead, she had more than enough time for her simple activities. Gradually she had learned to fill in her days by taking longer to do her work, and slowly the days themselves began to blend into one another, because there were no interruptions, no pauses. She liked the feeling it gave her of never having to hurry, yet of never having to wait. It made her feel secure, although she never thought of it in that way very often. It was almost as if her previous married life had provided her with the only means to the social world, and now that it was gone she had quietly slipped into a more natural way of living, a more private way of living. In fact a way of living which had always been intended for her alone, and in which her marriage had been only an interruption. So she didn't seem to notice the attitude of the people in the town. She was aware that she had drifted apart from them and that somehow she had ceased to know them, or they to know her. But it

didn't matter, and she didn't care. She felt as if everything inside her had slowed down, and it was a peaceful feeling.

It must have been this look of peace about her that the grocer's wife resented and called "superior." Every time she saw Mrs. Moshier, her resentment grew. It went against her nature to see anyone so complacent, so satisfied; and she said so to her husband at the supper table.

"Just plain laziness if you ask me," she said. "Puttering around that little garden of hers all day and not doing a lick of honest house-work. A good-for-nothing widow, that's all she is."

Her husband didn't pay much attention to these remarks. He had long since grown accustomed to them, and he only nodded his head while he continued eating. But their small son listened eagerly. He had inherited his mother's pettiness, her ignorance, and her viciousness, and in his man's brain, young as it was, these traits made themselves known in an impulse to destroy.

"Tell me more about Mrs. Moshier," he would say at dinner whenever his mother forgot to bring up the subject.

One day Mrs. Moshier looked out of her kitchen window and saw the grocer's boy throwing stones at her cow. Opening the window, she called out to him in a thin, cajoling voice. "Don't do that, please; you might hurt her."

The boy stood still for a minute; but when he realized that the woman wasn't angry, he turned around and threw the last stone that he had at the cow, then walked away.

The incident didn't bother Mrs. Moshier very much. Within an hour she had forgotten about it, and went

on slowly with her work. But the next afternoon the same thing happened—and every afternoon after that for a week. Soon she came to expect it, and it troubled her. It was an intrusion, and she didn't know exactly what to do about it. She didn't think so much about the little boy as about what she was going to say to him. Nothing like this had ever happened before, and she didn't know how to meet it. She felt helpless and tried not to think about it. But it kept breaking in on her and confusing her.

One day when the boy appeared, she stepped outside the house. It was the first time she had gone outside to meet him, and she didn't know quite why she did it. Without waiting for her to speak to him, the boy suddenly said, "You're a good-for-nothing widow." His voice sounded large with a curious exaltation and he repeated the words. Slowly all the expression on Mrs. Moshier's face faded away. She looked placid and dumb, almost foolish, standing there. Yet underneath this exterior there was a suggestion of despair, ranging from surprise to grief, which never quite got to the surface, as if she were striving to suppress it. Her thoughts were slipping loosely in her head now—always out of reach, but always pressing in on her. For a moment they would touch some forgotten idea, some impression; and her life, as it had been, would rise, calm and level, and take form about her. Then, as swiftly, a fragment of what the boy had said—"good-for-nothing," that was it—would come to her, changing the calmness to bleakness and the levelness to barrenness. Vaguely she felt she had to do something. She wanted to act, to move; for the first time since her husband's death it seemed a necessity to do something quickly, instantly. The boy didn't see her go into

the house—he had run away, frightened by her silence; but soon she reappeared carrying a bundle; and, if he had been there, he would have seen her stop, lock the door, and hurry away.

The town quickly learned that Mrs. Moshier had gone away, and as quickly forgot about it.

". . . .Bought a ticket for some place out in Nebraska," the station agent was heard to say.

The grocer's wife's only comment was, "Now what do you suppose made her do that for?"

But the town and thoughts of the town were far from Mrs. Moshier. She couldn't remember it very well anyway. It all seemed so long ago; and sometimes as she tended her garden in her new home, she thought that she was still living in the previous year. Perhaps she was living in the previous year; she couldn't remember. Her memory felt hazy, but it felt secure; it felt peaceful.

UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES

J. Jay Shapiro, '40

LELAND STOWE startled the world recently with his report of the work in Norway of what has since been called the "Fifth Column" or the "Trojan Horse." We have learned that it was not so much the military might of Germany which made possible the easy subjugation of that country, but rather the subversive activities of Nazi agents who undermined and corrupted the Norwegian authorities, so that forts and cities fell into German hands without a struggle. Although we have had no direct verification, as yet, of what actually occurred in Poland, surely no one is naive enough to think that a nation of thirty-two million, with a large and well-organized army, fell so easily in fair fight. We have heard of airplanes being ordered to remain on the ground until captured or destroyed by German bombs, and of troops ordered to fall back without fighting. Surely we must realize that only subversive activities could so have demoralized such a nation.

What have we to learn from these events? While we have nothing to fear from a military expedition to these shores, the danger of the subversive elements in this country is a very real one. It is because of these considerations that the bungling of Mr. Dies assumes such great importance.

It is indeed unfortunate that Mr. Dies is Chairman of the Congressional Committee for the Investigation of Un-American Activities, because in his investigations he has used methods which are reproachable. As a result, the real purpose of these investigations has become clouded and concealed under a hodge-podge of emotional thinking. Politics and ideologies have become so interwoven with the work of this Committee that it is often hard to determine the direction in which it is going.

Herein lies the danger of the entire situation, because elements of our population which would ordinarily line up behind the Committee, if it were run sincerely, now oppose it because Mr. Dies is insincere. Thus the liberal element has been alienated by the utter disregard of personal rights with which the Committee has been run. Again, all straight-thinking people have been alienated by the sallies from the main course of investigation into which Mr. Dies periodically plunges the Committee in his quest for publicity and the favor of the reactionary elements in this country.

It is, undoubtedly, on the instigation of the latter that Mr. Dies is always ready to drag that old, overworked red herring across the trail of every progressive movement in this country, a herring which is pretty muddy by this time. The danger of this practice is not that it offends fellow-travelers, for whom I have no sympathy whatever, but that the charges levied are so often discredited that we have come to put no faith whatever even in the true findings of the Committee. As a result, information which is pertinent and vital to the welfare of our country is not given the attention which it merits. Important information is lost sight of because of our emotional reactions against the means by which that information was secured.

Having considered the long-range view of the problem, a short-run view is now in order. Even though much more could be accomplished in a constructive direction without Mr. Dies, we must not lose sight of the fact that the little which is accomplished is still better than nothing at all. I am sure all of us will agree that the main purpose of the Committee, which is to expose Un-American activities and so protect American institutions, is more important than the embarrassment caused to a small minority. Thus, to abolish the Committee which is so important to the welfare of the entire nation in the interests of a small minority, (a move which is suggested by some), would be not only opposed to our democratic ideal, but also criminal. As much as attacks on sometimes innocent groups are to be deplored, the suppression of work which is so vital to our existence as a democracy is even more to be deplored. We must weigh carefully the good and the bad involved; and if there is the slightest bit of net good to be gained, then the committee should be continued as a short-run expediency.

I would conclude as follows. In the short run, we must tolerate questionable means in the interests of ultimate good, because of the gravity of the situation. In the long run, however, we must make plans which will aid the Congressional Committee for the Investigation of Un-American Activities, instead of hindering it, in its already extremely difficult task of safeguarding institutions which are so dear to all of us.

ENTRANCE TO ADIOZ

George W. Smith, Jr., '39

As I stumbled along the dry and dusty road that led toward the wooden gates, I could see a sinuous line of mules, all heavily laden with rough wooden boxes. A troop of famine-slender peons trudged alongside with a shuffling, half-mournful, half-lazy gait. Their arms flopped from their sides in token of weariness. Occasionally one stepped toward a mule to attack it with a switch. This was the only variation in the sombre and sun-parched landscape that stretched away behind and beside me.

Strung out along the sides and to the rear was a company of sturdy horsemen acting as guards. Riding on a white horse at the head of the cavalcade was a portly, square-shouldered captain. I recognized him by his leather jacket to be Josito Bianca, for in this dreary country none but the wealthy wore anything more than a band of dull-colored cotton about their bodies.

* * *

I had met Josito up the trail near the edge of the plain only two days before. My supplies had all been carried off by thieves. (In this country one had to carry all his food and valuables on his person unless he was guarded.) In my plight, confronted by starvation on one side and by failure of my botanical expedition on the other, I had given up all for lost, since it would have been suicidal to try wandering down the road in my condition.

Josito, with a company of three men, had suddenly come up fast in a cloud of powdered dust, and but for a quick sidestep on my part, I should have been trampled upon. They shouted when they saw me stagger and fall to the ground, for they thought they had struck me. Josito had quickly given me a draught from a flask of whiskey he carried in his saddlebag. In my weakened state I could not readily comprehend the situation, but soon my sunstruck eyes began to make out the bulk of his figure.

He was about six feet tall, and with his enormous chest and thick-set legs, he seemed to me in my daze to be some unearthly giant. His leather jacket was pulled tight about his frame, and his blue-checked kerchief struggled from the neckband of his tunic. I noticed, too, that each of his sun-bronzed companions wore worn, brown corduroy breeches—a strange sight in this barren spot. The forequarters of the horses, now champing and pawing the ground at the end of short tethers, were flecked with foam; and their legs were streaked with the sandy dust of a long day's travel.

Josito, seeing now that I had not been injured, was able to note the contrast between my skin and that of his own countrymen. After satisfying himself as to my present helplessness, he snapped out some commands to the silent onlookers, and they drew a canteen of water and a piece of the dried dough which was the bread of that country from one of the pouches which the horses carried. These they put beside me, after first relieving me of the revolver I carried for protection against marauders. Then, when each man had mounted his horse with a practiced swing into the saddle, the horses showed an eagerness to be off.

Josito Bianca—for I had heard one of his lieuten-

ants call him by that name when I had raised my head for the drink—stared at me for a moment, and then shrugging his shoulders, he, too, mounted his white stallion and was ready to move on. His horse reared into the air, and as it did so, Bianca held his arm aloft as a signal to his aides to go forward.

I was left alone on the caked and solitary plain.

* * *

Now I was entering slowly this little town. Haltingly, I had followed the narrow, winding road to the dried-mud gatehouse through which the cavalcade had just filed in quick order. I could see a cluster of straw-and-mud hovels and an open square ahead.

What was I to encounter now?

WASTELAND

Richard Knowles Morris, '40

COME with me into my swamp.

"Desolate," you say? "Dismal in this twilight. It covers two or three acres, more or less, as you Yankees say, and cannot certainly boast of grandeur. It is small and sunken, and since it is not an expansive desolation, what can it offer?"

Let me show you, I begged.

So we went down into the swamp.

A weather-worn footbridge, which has stood for forty years with some repairing, spans the still lagoon from the glen to the island. Each spring freshet has left its own peculiar mark on the bridge: one has raised a cedar pile on the left, slanting the walking board down to the right, while another has dislodged a support and twisted it about, bending it over with the current until it lies today ever so much like a spindle buoy in some great river, except there is now no current rushing about it, for it is summer. Other scars remain, but the bridge has stood them tolerably well and is quite passable. For fifty feet the bridge stretches, with its single railing, across the settled water. It is the first approach, the first stopping point, where we adjust ourselves to the mysterious atmosphere of the swamp. It is, as it were, the gateway of our "Sanctuary."

"This old swamp is out of place
I know, for Time moves on apace,
And all this tanglewood should go
Or 'Meadowbrook' may fall from grace.

Here is no beauty spot to show
Where unrestrained the wild grapes grow,
And the hairy arms of ivy swing
Above a stream that's dark and slow.

Yet, in my swamp, wood thrushes sing
And frogs pipe preludes to the spring,
While copper pools at twilight gleam
To etch the passing of a wing;

Beyond, the highway's endless stream
Of life goes swiftly thundering—
But here, the birds and I elude
The menace, in brief solitude."

Upstream faces west, where the red fires of sunset burn behind great bars of purple clouds. Above, a Persian blue seeps down through the black leaves of the old monarch oak that leans upward and over us from the island on the north. To the south, the earth has heaved up a rounded bluff of granite that closes us in from the highway beyond and the unlovely structures of man. Now it is time to listen, to stretch out on one's stomach on these old planks, to gaze down into the sky-stained pools and observe, before darkness closes us in from above as well as on our sides.

It is mysteriously quiet. The swamp has hushed at our approach. But now, settled and not stirring, our white faces leaning over the boards, the nocturnal creatures come out again, unseen but heard. Count those separate sounds carefully while you may, for soon they will blend in one great symphony and surge in muted, harmonious waves across this "desolation." Beyond the glassed surface of the water, a daring hyla

pipes a shrill defiance at the silence. Nearer, an old fellow with booming bass replies. A moment's quiet intervenes; then, directly beneath the bridge, a second "peeper" whispers faintly, as if he senses our presence, but straining human eyes cannot perceive him. Suddenly a dark shadow wings across the silver pool and overhead a stirring "quonk" rends the heavy air. The cry of the night heron hushes the creatures about us, and all the world seems to be holding its breath. Then, simultaneously, a hundred voices fill the glen. You can count no longer. "Here," as Thomas Hood has said, "The true silence is; self-conscious and alone." The swirl of a water snake shatters the immediate sounds to a whisper like the cymbal of an orchestra, and over on the island a twig snaps like the tap of a drumstick on a block.

"Yet, what does this offer?" you whisper as you lean closer to me. Your very whisper is reverence, and I know that you begin to understand. There is something here which makes you speak quietly, which places the more common thoughts of man in the background. Each sound, each color, each "swamp scent fused in evening dew,"* brings with it a flood of questions to "Man Thinking" as Emerson would call him.

Such a scene as this created that great fable *Silence* by Edgar Allan Poe, gave a setting for portions of Browning's *Caliban Upon Setebos,* inspired Leybach's *Fifth Nocturne,* or offered a theme for the modern descriptive creation *Chloe.* Out of such a swamp arose the legendary "Nebelfrauen," ladies of the mist—the proverbial will-o-the-wisp; and now that darkness has set in, you will agree that every patch of light is magnified, and that this little stretch has expanded into great reaches in the imagination, and brings to mind

* From a sonnet, "Nocturne," by the author.

Lanier's sweeping *Marshes of Glynn.* There is also a tropical aspect about this night, and we can visualize Conrad's famous *Lagoon,* or place here some scene from his *Heart of Darkness.* But this is not all—though in itself it would be sufficient. Cool shadows fall heavily upon us, and scarcely a star can prick the packed foliage above. The air is electrified with the presence of hidden creatures, with eyes staring forth in the blackness, seeing but unseen.

"In the swamp in secluded recesses,
A shy and hidden bird is warbling a song.
Solitary the thrush,
The hermit withdrawn to himself, avoiding the settlements,
Sings by himself a song.
Song of the bleeding throat,
Death's outlet song of life, (for well dear brother I know
If thou wast not granted to sing thou wouldst surely die.)"

So Walt Whitman sang of the thrush you hear in the bush behind you. And thus the swamp has offered music, and poetry, and prose to those who have taken the time to observe it.

It is morning. Floating leisurely down the stream on the far side of the island, we carefully manoeuver our little scow with a single pole of sassafras, sliding into the small backwaters here and there to gaze into the clear pools. A pickerel suspends itself close to the bottom, and is as camouflaged and lifeless as a water-soaked stick, but we know he is intensely glaring up at the great shadow of our scow as we let it drift into his pool. A turtle splashes into the water before we have a chance to see him, and a moment later his little triangular snout appears further off, snugly encased in the water. What other eyes are watching us, unbeknown, from under the witch-hazel and shad bushes along the bank? Black, beetle-like gyrini submerge at our advance: "lucky bugs" we call them, because, if

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Do you still continue to ask what this glen can offer, small as it is? Must I go on enumerating these things which were better observed than spoken? This is no wasteland. It is teeming with life. Perhaps the men driving their engines roaringly over the highway beyond us symbolize more accurately what we have chosen to call "progress." Perhaps they can rush by this little sanctuary of two or three acres, more or less, unheeding, and not retard their advance by overlooking my swamp. But the fact remains, that here is, if not the symbol of progress, the means by which progress came. Here is still the "testing ground of evolution." Here countless creatures live: reptiles, mammals, birds, fishes—and where we watched and listened in wonderment last night. The pools are pulsating with energy. A whole universe of atoms await the chemist to analyze, whole worlds of one celled animals swim in a spoonful of that thick liquid. As the day "stands at the flux of two eternities," we stand here at the flux of centuries of life. Paramecium and amoeba still function in this primeval swamp, as they did at the earth's beginnings, and every successive stage exists here, even to the two men sitting on the bridge gazing into the water below. Are these two men the answer? Who is to say? If for centuries this swamp has struggled to create so poor a thing as man, for centuries more it will struggle on—testing, adapting, modifying, continually perfecting, though always striving for that perfection, until man is superseded. Indeed, "Man is a thing to be surpassed," but the method is not as Nietzsche suspects. It lies, rather, in the age-old setting symbolized by my swamp. Man must still evolve.

Though I suspected these pools and this profuse display of life had things to tell us, I did not know it

would carry us this far. But we came to find out what it could offer, and still we have not sounded the bottom of its wealth. It still holds innumerable lessons, and I shall return to it tomorrow, and again in the fall when the glory of the swamp-maples burn throughout, and scarlet flames of the cardinal flower appear between clumps of Joe Pye Weed; or in winter, when ice laces the banks of the main stream, and black, bare trees are silhouetted against cold, evening skies. Each day, each season, holds secrets in my swamp. All philosophy is not written in books, all stories are not in fiction, all music is not played by orchestras, all colors not splashed on canvas, nor beauty in poetry. They miss the greater part of the thrill of existence, which this marsh so generously offers. Aided by the imagination, which can expand or contract these small areas of nature, the extent to which one's thoughts may aspire are limitless. It matters not whether Hindenburg tramps with his men through the great swamps near Tannenberg, or soldiers some day pass through this peaceful little glen, the swamps will not care. They may be quiet a moment while man has his day of mad fighting and scheming, then they will go on with their eternal problem of creation. If man refuses to evolve, they will have another for his place in a few hundred centuries. My swamp seems to say that man may not be the answer. Homer Smith came to a similar conclusion when he was studying the kamongo on the dried flats of Lake Victoria in Africa, and he warned men that he, too, may find his "blind-alley," that he, too, may be but one of the many beings in what Darrow called the "cruel and useless spawning of life."

And when my mind is tired of philosophizing on the great enigmas suggested by this "wasteland," it

can also find here subject for poetic and romantic contemplation and fill me with the sweet buoyancy that comes from feeling one with all life; the eternal unity of all things. Such Poe must have felt when he wrote *Silence,* and looked out alone upon some desolate swamp.

All this my "wasteland" has offered, and it awaits my return to reveal more.

TO DESDEMONA

O lovely lady, whose unspotted fame
Slander did envy and conspire to blot,
The future, shedding light upon thy name,
Thy light relumes; extinction there is not.
The rose, once plucked, hath but an hour of life,
Then fading, scents the summer breath no more;
But roseate memories of thee are rife
Where breathes the wind of love on Cyprus' shore.
Breath, once denied thee, fell on Verdi's ear
And breathed again as "Ave" to the sky.
Thy moan of "Salce, salce" low but clear,
Transports our souls in deathless melody.
Thy beauty, dying childless, by our tears,
Begets immortal beauty with the years.

William B. VanWyck, '41

DIMINUENDO

Lie there in beauteous sleep, O sweet-faced girl,
Your browned and tender hands so lightly laid
Upon your youthful and unburdened breast,
While pouring in profusion round the sands,
Your lovely, golden hair.

Sleep quietly and dream of unreal joys,
Before the agonizing weight of life
Bears down, and loads those innocent hands with pain,
Or puts a darkling hue upon the strands
Now salted by the air.

No visionary grief or drying tears
To mar the gentle beauty of your face,
No thought of mate or son, of life or death,
Dream on in boundless deeps, amid the sands,
The winds, and salty air.

Etched on your countenance, one can discern
A freedom, like a sun-tipped gull in flight,
That makes you sister to the driven crests;
Yet mingled with such tenderness and grace,
O nameless soul so fair!

The aged mother guards her children well;
The sea's capricious winds blow not too hard
Nor scatter sand to blind you when you wake.
The sun is reddening fast, lest you should smart
Beneath its torrid glare.

The sighing dunes murmur their love to you
In song too delicate for you to hear;
But O, the tune the weathered cypress sings
Is like a lonely lyre in the night,
Sounding an ancient prayer!

The conflagration of the sunset flames
Has subtly changed the surface of the sea,
And waves of fire now beat upon the shore
For one brief instant, till the dusk shall null
The blended colors there.

The foam-capped swells, impersonal and vast,
Intoning elemental harmonies,
Forever crash in ruins and recede.
In solitary grandeur roars the deep,
Restless, proud and bare!

Ralph S. Grover, '41

COURTESY, GRACE AND POISE

Prospero DeBona, '41

NOT so long ago I was cajoled into attending the dancing school recital of the little girl who lives next door. Everyone said that it was a perfectly lovely recital; but, to be brutally frank about the whole matter, I did not enjoy it. The spectacle of several dozen eleven-and twelve-year-old couples gravely gliding and bobbing about only brought vividly to mind my own dismal essay into the terpsichorean realm of one-two-slide and three-four-turn.

Back in the early nineteen-thirties, even in Hartford, Connecticut, dancing schools definitely did not bask in that warmth of pre-adolescent approval which apparently they enjoy today; and I fought quite bitterly against enrolling in a class at first, gloomily informing my adamant mother that I should be forever damned as a sissy by my more fortunate contemporaries. And to make matters the more humiliating, I discovered that I must go to my ruin in company with my sister, who thought that she should just adore dancing, which gives you a brief insight into *her* personality. It certainly didn't improve my morale any.

But after I got into the swing of things (although I should willingly have endured the most frightful torment rather than admit it to a soul), I think that I rather enjoyed going. Classes were held in the public school gymnasium every Saturday afternoon from two until four; and I, with my dancing slippers carefully

concealed from cynical eyes in a mauve-colored velveteen bag, was always quite prompt.

The school (in the semi-annual brochure it was called a school for the promotion of courtesy, grace, and poise) was run by a middle-aged lady—a middle-aged lady who indulged in a barbarous flair for tight-fitting gowns of a garish hue, was possessed of a somewhat strident voice, and breathed hard and audibly, being afflicted with chronic asthma. This lady, Mrs. Letitia Loring by name, was enthusiastically, if not competently, assisted by her husband, a mild-mannered little man who accompanied Bertha at the piano with the cornet and was familiarly addressed as Howard by the pupils.

I don't think that Mrs. Loring exactly approved of such free and easy *camaraderie* between her husband and pupils; but she passed it off with admirable guile, invariably saying to strangers, "The children are *so* fond of Howard. He has such a marvelous *way* with them."

Mrs. Loring's technique was simple but effective. She was right up to the minute on all the latest dances, and she made a point of taking frequent excursions to New York in order to gain first-hand information from the "masters." She thought that a gentleman by the name of Mr. Arthur Murray was wonderful, and she was constantly carrying the torch for him. It was always Mr. Arthur Murray this and Mr. Arthur Murray that with Mrs. Loring. It got so bad after a while that I began to visualize Mr. Arthur Murray as being a scantily draped gentleman leaping blithely about with wings fastened to his heels, just like the pictures I had seen of Mercury in my ancient history text-books. This conception, no doubt, did Mr. Murray a rank injustice.

When we were in the process of learning one of the latest dances (and in those days the Harvard Hop, the Varsity Drag, the Fox Trot, and a somewhat modified version of the Charleston were ringing all sorts of bells in Hartford), we would gather in a large circle around Mrs. Loring; and she would then expound on the intricacies of the movement.

"Class," Mrs. Loring would say, clasping her hands feverishly, "we will now learn how to do the *Harvard* Hop."

Loud applause from the impressionable class.

"Really, class," Mrs. Loring would continue, pleased at this spontaneous response, "the Harvard Hop is the most marvelous dance. Mr. Arthur Murray says that this dance is *certain* to live. And all the young *society* people are doing it." (Apparently Mrs. Loring did not consider her eager pupils to be society.) "I know that you will just *love* learning it."

Further applause from the class.

And after this terrific build-up, Mrs. Loring would clack her castanets for attention—*clack-clack*—and say, "Now then, we will begin. First, place your *l-e-f-t* foot forward," she would instruct, doing so herself, "and then bring the *r-i-g-h-t* foot up *s-l-o-w-l-y*—and *hop*, hop, *hop!* All right, now, again. Left and right. *S-l-o-w-l-y. . . .Clack-clack!* No, *no*, class! You must *not* hop with your left foot until you *completely* close with your right. I know that the hopping is the most fun, but we *must* learn to do this correctly. Once more, then, class. Left close right—*hop*, hop, *hop! That's* better. *Much* better, class. Left close right—*hop*, hop *hop! Fine!* Now we will try it with the music. *Clack-clack.* Piano, if you please, Bertha. *Now!* Left close right—*dum*, dee, *dum! Good* class

good!" In time with the music. "Left close right—*dum*, dee, *dum*!"

And after we finally mastered the left-close-right—*dum*, dee, *dum*!, we would graduate to the turn and then to the finer points of this incredible spasm. Then, and only then, would we be permitted to attempt it with our partners. Mrs. Loring was nothing if not thorough. She was a real stickler for the fundamentals. And occasionally, if the class proved to be particularly backwards, Mrs. Loring was not above grabbing Howard and putting on an exhibition to show us exactly Mr. Arthur Murray's idea of how the thing was supposed to go.

Despite the excellence of Mrs. Loring's teaching, however, it became lamentably obvious after the first few classes that this little school for the promotion of courtesy, grace, and poise was destined to be anything but a great big, happy family. Rivalries were inordinately keen, and several bitter feuds soon leaped into flame. All the little girls recklessly dispensed with maidenly decorum and vied with each other in a shameless attempt to win the favors of the gallants. So far as the girls were concerned, it was a case of dog-eat-dog, for there was an embarrassing dearth of masculine talent at Mrs. Loring's dancing school. And the doting mothers, like swallows perched upon a telephone wire, would sit in the second row, flashing surreptitious signals to their offspring as they danced by, because even our elders considered our social endeavors with great seriousness.

Some of these signals were really quite ingenious when one stops to consider that the good ladies were considerably handicapped by not being able to express themselves vocally. They did remarkably well. If a mother touched one shoulder, it meant that her little

girl's petticoat had slipped a notch or two—and for God's sake to pull it up. And a slight touch to the cheek might get across to a small daughter the message that her face was shining from perhaps a too strenuous rendition of the dance. My own mother was not an exception. When my hair stood up in back (which it frequently did despite liberal applications of a gummy concoction called Slickum) she would pat the top of her head meaningly, at the same time carrying on an animated conversation with the lady on the right, and immediately I would repair to the boys' room for hasty renovations. I, too, took my personal appearance seriously.

According to the precepts of this dancing school, the first couple reaching the floor was entitled to lead the short march which was the prelude to each dance. This ruling was a grave error on Mrs. Loring's part; for, inevitably, there were many ribs jabbed by agitated elbows as the couples jockeyed for positions at the start. The leading role was prized very highly. And Mrs. Loring's early announcement that at the annual recital, which was to be held at the Bond, Hartford's largest and most swank hotel, the best dancers would be given the honor of leading the Grand March (as she euphemistically put it). This did not help matters any.

Naturally, with such a reward in the offing, I strove desperately to improve upon my rather shaky technique, the more so, perhaps, because my sister, who ran somewhat to bulk in those days, was to be featured in a solo dance which Mrs. Loring, with a nice flair for the symbolic, had entitled *Annie Apple*. My earnest efforts were rewarded, and I succeeded in being chosen as the male principal in this important finale of the year. And the girl selected as my partner was, to my

almost hysterical delight, a little red-head exotically named Viola, whom I had long studied from a thoughtful distance. But this honor was not to be one entirely of hosannahs and fanfare; for I soon discovered, Mrs. Loring reminding me again and again, her capacious bosom heaving like a troubled sea, that mine was a very great responsibility.

"It all depends on you, Junior," Mrs. Loring would pant, an agitated hand clutching at her throat. "Everything,"—and here a deep breath—, "depends on you. You *mustn't* fail me."

It began to bother me a little.

But finally, after many frantic rehearsals, came the long-awaited evening of triumph. The little girls were clad in all their ribboned finery, and the boys (I, especially) were sights at which to marvel. I was tastefully accoutred in a Buster Brown collar (a deluded inspiration of my poor mother, who was firmly convinced that it lent me a flower-like aspect), a double-breasted navy blue jacket, white flannel knickerbockers, black stockings, and patent leather pumps set off with a bow. White gloves and a boutonniere completed this virginal ensemble.

After much preliminary fussing about, Mrs. Loring's assistants got us all lined up on the floor below. Then the zero moment: a sudden terrifying hush, and the lilting strains of *The Beautiful Blue Danube* drifted down from the ballroom above. I still can't, to this day, understand why, in the name of something celestial, Mrs. Loring ever chose a waltz in lieu of a march, unless, of course, *The Beautiful Blue Danube* was the only selection which Howard could play reasonably well, and not wanting him to feel out of things, she wished him to appear with Norman Clou-

tier and his Merry Madcaps (a band which was really the *last* word in Hartford in the 'twenties) for at least one number before he vanished behind the scenes.

At any rate I was given the nod by a fluttery *aide-de-camp,* and I led the parade up the stairs, feeling very proud indeed. But when we popped out of the French doors, my pride rapidly changed to an emotion akin to that experienced by a scared rabbit. In short, I had stage fright. I don't like to hold grudges, but I really think that Mrs. Loring displayed poor judgment in not preparing me for the shock; and I still think that if she had, things never would have turned out the way they did.

As it was, when I saw the huge ballroom jammed with beaming relatives and bored friends, and Mrs. Loring, flanked by her maids-of-honor, lolling with a painful nonchalance beneath a roccoco canopy of daffodils extravagantly interspersed with roses, my knees actually shook. I broke out in a dreadful cold sweat. If it had not been for Viola, who was made of sturdy stuff, I should have given it all up right then and there. which, perhaps, might have been the best way out. However, I was half-led, half-tugged over to the teacher, waited while Viola dropped a curtsy, and then made Mrs. Loring a deep bow (the hand-to-stomach type), which she acknowledged with a gracious sweep of her ostrich-feathered fan and a smile much too sweet and tender to be perfectly natural.

Things went all right the first trip around the ballroom as we were waiting for the rest of the class to pay its respects and catch up with us. But after that formality was successfully concluded, the trouble started. For some reason or other, Mrs. Loring had evolved an elaborate scheme of criss-cross marching which was designed to bring down the house. The idea was

that the girls and boys were to separate, march around the hall, criss-cross at one end, march around again and again, criss-crossing at carefully-planned intervals, and finally end up together in the center amid impassioned applause. And the whole thing was just as involved as it sounds. The plan, I suppose, had its points, and it worked very nicely in rehearsal. But Mrs. Loring had neglected to take into account the rather unstable temperament of her leading man.

When we reached the end of the hall and Viola turned off, I was utterly lost, having completely forgotten what I was supposed to do. So I marched—aimlessly and at random, roaming all around the place, hoping against hope that I would come out all right in the end. But if the boy behind me hadn't been such a sheep, he no doubt could have put me on the right track; or, perhaps, as I am now inclined to suspect, the envious creature—one Winthrop George—having quite violently resented my selection as the best male performer in the class, derived a malicious satisfaction from my debacle. As I passed by Mrs. Loring's bower on one of my many stabs in the dark, I could tell that I was a long way off. She was glaring at me, and her usually florid face was ghastly beneath its rouge. I was miserable and alarmed, but by that time things had gone too far to be mended.

I continued to march; and finally I found myself in a corner between the orchestra and the wall, a frightful corner from which there was no graceful retreat. God only knows what impelled me to blunder into that *cul-de-sac*. The others piled up in back of me, and there we were—like cattle neatly penned.

The girls, meanwhile, having arrived safely, under Viola's competent leadership, at their destination in the center of the hall, had paused uncertainly; and the

audience, which by this time, realized that something was horribly wrong, was controlling its varied emotions with difficulty. But Mrs. Loring didn't even try. With one wild shriek that tore at my guilty heart, she mercifully swooned. Her maids-of-honor helped her downstairs.

At this crucial moment the Merry Madcaps thoughtfully abandoned *The Beautiful Blue Danube* for the more torrid strains of *Oh, Katherina;* and Howard left the orchestra and came over, telling us to get the hell out there and dance. I think that he was a little upset, too.

I heard afterwards that the rest of the recital was a grand success. But I didn't see it. I didn't even see my sister's interpretation of *Annie Apple.* I had gone home.